

AGENDA: May 11, 2004

4.4

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: Gatekeeper Authorization for Mayfield
Site General Plan and Precise Plan
Changes

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the assignment of staff and other resources for an application to amend the General Plan and the Mayfield Site Precise Plan to allow for mixed residential and retail uses.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will be a need to utilize staff or other resources of about 1.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) persons in the 2004-05 and 2005-06 fiscal years. A detailed discussion of staff resources is provided later in this report.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The City's Gatekeeper Ordinance requires all private party applications for a General Plan or precise plan amendment to be forwarded to the Council for authorization to process the application. This ordinance was adopted to allow the Council to evaluate the estimated City resources required to analyze an application, the currently available resources and the relative priority of the subject application in relation to other work that might be assigned to these resources. The gatekeeper review does not involve an analysis of the merits of the proposed amendments and Council authorization of staff to process the application does not in any way indicate support for the proposal.

Description of Application

On April 19, 2004, Toll Brothers, Inc. submitted an application to revise the General Plan and Mayfield Site Precise Plan to allow redevelopment of a 27-acre office center at the intersection of San Antonio Road and Central Expressway (see Attachment 1). Toll Brothers, Inc. is a residential developer with projects in the Northeast, the Mid-Atlantic region, several Western states and California. The firm is under contract to purchase the property from Hewlett-Packard. A portion of the site, 4.5 acres, is in Palo Alto.

This application has been anticipated for some time and the Council has held three study sessions since September 2003 to discuss the site and the review process. The application is for land use changes that would allow redevelopment of this industrially zoned site with

residential and retail uses. The application is general in nature because the City Council has indicated in the study sessions that it wants a range of alternatives to be considered and it wants the neighborhood to be an important part of the process. Palo Alto must also be included in the process.

Status of Work Program

Staff has begun drafting a work program for the planning process, which will be ready for Council review and approval in June. Drafting the work program is a collaborative process involving the neighborhood, the developer and the City of Palo Alto, with review by the Environmental Planning Commission later this month.

Some considerations in developing the work program are:

- The work program is expected to have three broad phases: Phase I—Selection of alternatives, including a "preferred" alternative; Phase II—Preparation of Precise Plan, Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and fiscal analysis; and Phase III—Review and approval of specific development project.
- As requested by the City Council, staff is working on a schedule that completes Phases I and II within the 16 to 18 months originally outlined by staff to Hewlett-Packard.
- Consultants will be needed for the fiscal analysis and the EIR, including subconsultants for traffic, a tree survey, archaeological evaluation and possibly other issues. In addition, an urban design consultant will be needed to assist staff in developing alternatives and to advise on design standards and guidelines for the Precise Plan. Special expertise will also be needed to develop proposals for improving bicycle and pedestrian circulation through the area and across Central Expressway to the Caltrain station.
- The costs of processing the applications, including consultants, will be paid for by the developer.

Gatekeeper Evaluation

Under the terms of the Gatekeeper Ordinance, the Council's review of when the application should be processed and what resources should be used is based on four criteria as follows:

1. *Effect of this application on other current or anticipated applications or assignments.* It is anticipated that 1.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) persons will be needed over each of the next two fiscal years to process the General Plan amendments, the revised Precise Plan, the Environmental Impact Report and the Planned Community Permits needed to build

the project. Given current workload and current staffing of 8.0 FTE regular positions (and a 0.5 FTE consultant planner for downtown projects) in the Planning Division, an additional 0.6 FTE consultant planner will be needed to assist with this project and to fill in for regular staff who will be assigned to this project (see Attachment 2—Planning Division Draft Work Program 2004-05).

2. *Should this application be combined with other requests?* There are no other pending applications or planned studies related to this application.
3. *Previous reviews.* In 2001-02, the five-acre portion of the site on the east side of Mayfield Avenue was considered for rezoning to housing as part of the Housing Element process. Ultimately, the City Council dropped the area from the list of potential housing sites and approved an alternative policy that says: "Revise the Mayfield Mall Precise Plan to allow for housing and other uses if redevelopment is initiated by the property owner."
4. *Council identification of staff resources and priority of this project.* This site has the potential to produce many more housing units than any of the sites on the Housing Element list. In deciding to process this application, the City Council will be giving this site priority over initiating the rezoning of the Housing Element sites. Devoting 1.3 FTE to this project is a reflection of its community-wide significance. It is recommended that a 0.6 FTE consultant planner be assigned to assist with this project. As indicated above, staff and contract planner costs will be charged to the applicant on a cost-recovery basis.

Long-Term Fiscal Impacts

The Gatekeeper Ordinance also requires a fiscal impact analysis for any application that is subject to gatekeeper review. A fiscal impact analysis will be prepared during the process of reviewing this application. It will be a key factor in evaluating alternatives. Therefore, staff is recommending that this requirement be deferred until that time.

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PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting and newspaper notice. Copies of the staff report were sent to the applicant, the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association and the City of Palo Alto.

Prepared by:

Approved by:

Lynnie Melena
Senior Planner

Elaine Costello
Community Development Director

Kevin C. Duggan
City Manager

LM/6/CAM
859-05-11-04M-E^

Attachments: 1. Location Map
2. Draft Work Program 2004-05

cc: Mr. Jim Meek and Ms. Kelly Snider, Toll Brothers

Ms. Nola McBain, Monta Loma Neighborhood Association

Ms. Lisa Grote, Chief Planning Official, City of Palo Alto

Environmental Planning Commission